shoes a per "IS-11226" specification which has direct mouded soe of nitrile rubber and considered superior to 'BATA' safety shoes which have stuck-on-soles.

Construction allowance for HSCL workers

949. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to tate:

(a) whether it is a fact that HSCL has been the construction company under SAIL and 21,000 workers of HSCL get construction allowance due to their hazardous working conditions;

(b) whether it is also a fact that management has decided to curtail the said allowance from May, 1992;

(c) whether it is a fact that these workers do not get fringe benefits like SAIL employees; and

(d) if so, the reasons for the curtailment of construction allowance to the HSCL workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Prior to 1978, HSCL was under the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL); thereafter it became an independent compnay. HSCL' present workforce is approximately 19,000 employees.

The construction allowance was being given not for hazardous working conditions but to compensate for lack of facilities like housing, and medical facilities, etc., at the project sites located at out of the way places. As per the 3rd Pay Commission's recommendations, only employees drawing basic pay upto Rs. 1900|- per month were eligible for construction allowance.

(b) and (d) Yes, Sir. Based on the recommendations of the High Power Pay Committee, construction allowance has been withdrawn from some project sites where amenities as mentioned above are now available.

(c) Various benefits available to HSCL employees and SAIL employees cannot be compared, as these are two separate companies, involved in different areas of operations.

Import|export of steel

950. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 33 MT of steel was exported during the last year at a cheaper rate while finished steel was imported at a much higher cost; if so, whether such a policy would not halt the growth of steel industry in the country; and

(b) what steps Government have taken so far for the development of indigenous technology for the steel sector for increasing|developing growth of this industry

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) During the year 1991-92, a total quantity of 3,87,000 tonnes of steel valued at Rs. 383 crores was exported. The average FOB price of steel thus works out to Rs. 9,896 per tonne. The average CIF price of imported steel was Rs. 13,232 per tonne. The higher cost of steel imports is mainly on account of additional cost of freight and insurance and the fact that the imports are mainly of high value specialised steels, while exports are mostly low value items.

(b) Government has set up various agencies such as National Research Laboratories under the CSIR to take up research projects in relevant areas including steel making. A National Mission for Iron & Steel has also been constituted to provide scientific and technological inputs to the iron & steel industry both in public and private sector? Besides, the integrated steel plants have taken up moder-